

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In view of the amendments and remarks herein, favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested. By this Amendment, claims 1-11 have been amended and claim 12 has been canceled. Thus, claims 1-11 are now pending for further examination.

Claims 1-12 have been rejected under 35 USC 103 as being obvious over Iwasaki et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,704,837) in view of Yamamoto. For at least the reasons set forth below, Applicant respectfully submits that the amended claims herein are not rendered obvious by the cited references.

In order to more clearly distinguish Iwasaki, the independent claims (*e.g.*, claims 1 and 7) herein have been amended to require that the camera angle and the inclination amount data be used to determine the moving direction. This feature, in combination with the other claimed features, is not taught or suggested by any of the prior art of record, including Iwasaki and Yamamoto. Thus, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

Iwasaki discloses a video game steering system having first and second steering units which can be used by the operator to control the direction and speed of a movable object. However, the direction at which the steering units must be moved to cause forward movement of the movable object is always equal to the actual forward direction of the steering units. More particularly, as shown in Figs. 8a-8h and Figs. 9a-9d of Iwasaki, the levers must always be pushed in the forward direction in order to cause

forward movement of the movable object in the game space. In fact, as can be seen in Fig. 7, the controller includes permanently positioned labels, i.e. "FORWARD", "BACKWARD", "L" and "R", which confirms to the operator that the control levers must always be rotated in the forward direction to cause forward movement of the movable object. As stated at column 11, lines 34-36, "[i]f both steering levers 12 and 14 are inclined in the forward direction as shown in Fig. 8a, the future tank 500 will be moved in the forward direction." In other words, in Iwasaki, the direction at which the levers must be moved to cause forward movement of the movable object is always forward, because Iwasaki does not take into account, when determining movement of the object, the camera angle at which the object is being viewed at the time the operator inclines the operating member.

The camera angle is not taken into account in Iwasaki when determining the moving direction of the movable object, because the system of Iwasaki assumes that the camera angle will always be at the position of the movable object (i.e. the drivers seat of the future tank 500). As a result, the system permanently sets the actual forward direction of the steering levers to be the direction at which the levers must be moved to cause forward movement of the tank. More particularly, as explained in Iwasaki at, for example, column 3, lines 31-64, the system sets the X-axis and Y-axis coordinate system for the propulsion units on the future tank to equal the X-axis and Y-axis coordinate system for the steering levers. Thus, the actual forward, backward, left and right directions for the propulsion units always operate in response to actual forward,

backward, left and right angles of the steering levers, respectively. Accordingly, no camera angle factor is used to determine the movement direction for the movable object.

A major disadvantage of the system of Iwasaki is that, if the point of view is changed from the driver's position to another position, it may become difficult for the operator to accurately control the movement of the object as desired. For example, if the object is viewed from the front, the operator must realize that the levers must be angled to the right, not the left, in order to steer the object to the right. This makes it difficult for the user to determine the relationship between the image being viewed and the incline directions necessary to move the object as desired. It is noted that Iwasaki does disclose at column 15, lines 1-5, that the display could include a plurality of windows which represent other viewing angles, such as a rear-vision mirror or a view from above the tank. However, these optional windows are only displayed simultaneously with the view from the driver's seat, and do not result in any change in the relationship between the lever movement direction and the resulting object movement.

In contrast to Iwasaki, in the invention defined by the amended claims herein, it is easier for the operator to determine the proper joystick angle for a particular movement of the movable object, because the camera angle is taken into account when determining the moving direction. Thus, if the object is viewed from the front, then movement of the joystick to the right causes the object to move left and visa versa. As a result, it is easier for the player to determine the relationship between the joystick incline direction and the movement direction of the object regardless of the camera angle. Thus, the claimed

invention can advantageously be used in connection with games wherein the player's viewpoint may change relative to the object during the game.

Yamamoto was only cited with respect to the "one frame" feature of the original claims. This feature has been canceled from the pending claims herein. Yamamoto does not make up for the deficiencies set forth above with respect to Iwasaki. Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that the amended claims herein are not rendered obvious by the cited references.

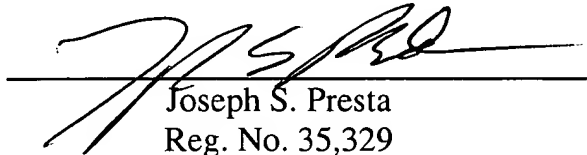
In view of the amendments and remarks herein, Applicant believes that all of the claims as presently presented are allowable over the prior art of record. Thus, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections and allowance of all claims are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner have any questions regarding this Amendment, or deem that further issues need to be addressed prior to allowance, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at the phone number below.

Respectfully submitted,

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